

## Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CU-04 MMO-04 EB-07 DOTE-00 OES-06

ERDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15

PRS-01 SP-02 STR-04 AID-05 FRB-01 TRSE-00 XMB-04

OPIC-06 CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /096 W

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R 171840Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1024

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 0089

UNCLAS PARIS 14553

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, FR

SUBJ: PATRONAT CONCERNS IN FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

REF: PARIS 11256

1. PRESIDENT FRANCOIS CEYRAC OF FRENCH EMPLOYERS FEDERATION (PATRONAT) CALLED PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 13 TO EXPRESS VIEWS OF FRENCH BIG BUSINESS IN GENERAL ON FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND TO ANNOUNCE PATRONAT BICENTENNIAL PROGRAMS (REFTEL). IN ADDITION TO ABOUT 15 NEWSMEN, CONFERENCE WAS ATTENDED BY SEVERAL FRENCH BUSINESS LEADERS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF PATRONAT'S "FRANC-DOLLAR COMITE" AND BY EMBASSY COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR.

2. MAIN POINTS MADE BY CEYRAC WERE AS FOLLOWS:

A. AMERICANS AND FRENCHMEN "DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER WELL ENOUGH". THERE IS ATMOSPHERE OF MISUNDERSTANDING AND MISTRUST BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WHICH IS OFTEN BASED ON MISINFORMATION. TO PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING, PATRONAT WILL BE SENDING 16 FRENCH BUSINESSMEN AND REPORTERS TO U.S. DURING BICENTENNIAL YEAR AND HAS UNCLASSIFIED

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INVITED ABOUT A HUNDRED AMERICAN HEADS OF COMPANIES AND

ACADEMICIANS TO FRANCE IN SEPTEMBER.

B. AMERICANS DO NOT REALIZE EXTENT OF RECENT FRENCH INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF FRENCH TECHNOLOGY. THUS PATRONAT WILL BE COOPERATING WITH FRENCH INDUSTRY TO MAKE AMERICANS MORE AWARE OF FRENCH TECHNOLOGY IN SUCH FIELDS AS SURFACE TRANSPORTATION, ATOMIC ENERGY AND AEROSPACE.

C. THERE IS GROWING FEELING IN FRANCE AND EUROPE THAT U.S. IS GOING PROTECTIONIST. ALTHOUGH PATRONAT IS WELL AWARE OF DISTINCTION BETWEEN TRADE DAMAGE COMPLAINTS AND WHAT ADMINISTRATION DOES ABOUT THEM IT IS NOT CONVINCED THAT ADMINISTRATION CAN (OR WOULD SEEK TO) SUPPRESS PROTECTIONISTS ON ALL CASES. THUS THIRD PATRONAT OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO ENCOURAGE MORE OPEN TRADING ENVIRONMENT BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES (ESPECIALLY, WE GATHER, AT U.S. END).

D. UNSTABLE INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE RATES CONTINUE TO POSE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS. ALTHOUGH DOCTRINAL DISCORD BETWEEN FRANCE AND U.S. IS CURRENTLY MUTED MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE BY TWO COUNTRIES WORKING TOGETHER TO RESTORE MORE STABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ESTABLISH RULES OF CONDUCT WHICH WILL PREVENT COMPETITIVE DEVALUATIONS. ENCOURAGEMENT OF THIS COLLABORATION WILL BE FOURTH PATRONAT OBJECTIVE.

3. COMMENT: THERE IS LITTLE NEW IN THIS LATEST EXPRESSION OF PATRONAT CONCERNS, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO PROTECTIONISM AND MONETARY INSTABILITY. BUT COMING AS IT DOES ON EVE OF PRESIDENTIAL VISIT AND ACCOMPANIED BY PUBLIC STATEMENT OF PATRONAT INTENTION TO CONDUCT ACTION PROGRAMS TO RESOLVE FRANCO-AMERICAN PROBLEMS PERCEIVED BY FRENCH BIG BUSINESS, CEYRAC PRESS CONFERENCE SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY. WE WILL BE WATCHING WITH INTEREST TO SEE WHAT FORM THESE INITIATIVES TAKE OVER MONTHS AHEAD. TO JUDGE FROM RECENT EXPERIENCE, WE CAN EXPECT TO BE CONSULTED PERIODICALLY BY FRANC-DOLLAR COMITE IN IMPLEMENTATION STAGE.

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Authority:** CollinP0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 JUL 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <09 JUL 2004 by mendozsm>; APPROVED <26 JAN 2005 by CollinP0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**Subject:** PATRONAT CONCERNS IN FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS  
**TAGS:** EGEN, SOPN, FR, US, PATRONAT, (CEYRAC, FRANCOIS)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006